



# Flight Jacket

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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar

December 31, 2003

# 2003

## *Year in Review*

See **Story**, page 7

See **Year in Photos**, pages 8-9

Photo by Sgt. M.P. Shelato

## Inside

Weekend forecast from Miramar's weather station



66° / 52°  
Today



67° / 51°  
Saturday



64° / 55°  
Sunday

**HMM-161  
trains for  
deployment**



Page 4

**2003 Year  
in Photos**



Pages 8-9



# Miramar Mail



**Why does it cost money to rent recreational gear?**  
**Staff Sgt. Joe Mares, assistant radio chief, MASS-6**

Marine Corps Community Services provides morale, recreation and welfare support to Miramar's active duty personnel and their families. Some MCCS facilities are funded primarily with appropriated funds (the gyms and library are examples). Others, like the Auto Hobby Shop and Outdoor Recreation Center, are partially-funded and must generate some additional non-

appropriated funds to stay in operation. Still others are paid for entirely by NAFs. NAF money is generated by sales, fees and charges to the users. To simplify many pages of regulations, Congress isn't authorized to appropriate funds to pay for recreational gear, so MCCS has to charge a small fee to provide it, maintain it and replace it.



**Maj. Gen. Jon A. Gallinetti**

**Editor's note:**  
E-mail your questions to the Commanding General, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar at:  
[ombpaoflight@miramar.usmc.mil](mailto:ombpaoflight@miramar.usmc.mil)

## Planning for tomorrow, today

Story by Staff Sgt. Maria C. Brookman

MCAS Miramar

A sad reality that many Marines face when deciding to leave the Marine Corps is not having the financial resources to support the same standard of living they had while on active duty.

Regardless of age, time in service or direction a servicemember's career takes, it's important to plan for economic success before the uniform is hung up for the last time.

Former Marine Sgt. Michael S. Honeycutt of Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 11, left active service in July 2000 because he felt "generally disgruntled and disillusioned with the Marine Corps."

"Marines I knew...were getting (selected) for recruiting duty and I really didn't want to be a recruiter. We kept hearing about the booming economy and how much money there was to be made as a civilian so rather than gamble with recruiting duty, I got out to try my hand at civilian life," said

Honeycutt.

Honeycutt, who currently resides in Woodbury, Minn., was fortunate enough to receive his last Marine Corps paycheck the same weekend he received his first civilian salary and was financially secure through his transition. However, he does admit that he is behind the power curve when it comes to long-term finances.

"I wish I had set up a (savings allotment) of \$100 or so per month that I didn't touch until I got out. Many young Marines feel

strapped for cash ... and the idea of putting away one or \$200 a month seems ludicrous," he said. "Looking back though it wouldn't have been that hard and the benefits of saving far outweigh the temporary hardship."

Gunnery Sgt. Rex L. Stark, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16 assistant maintenance chief, begins terminal leave in April 2004 and has been investing his money in savings bonds for the last 19 years. He knew

See **Saving**, page 15

## MCCUU guidance

Lt. Gen. James T. Conway

Commanding General, I MEF

The transition from the camouflage utility uniform to the new Marine Corps Combat Utility Uniform digital Marine pattern (MARPAT) woodland and desert have resulted in a marked degradation of uniformity throughout our ranks. Recent conversations with the Commandant of the Marine Corps assure me that he shares my concern and also desires a rapid return to uniform standards.

Effective Monday, commanders will standardize the wear of the combat utility uniform in accordance with the following guidance:

Monday through Thursday the standard combat utility uniform is woodland combat utility uniform (until phased out or MCCUU woodland digital MARPAT only) with Marine Corps combat boots. On Friday, commanders may authorize the wear of MCCUU digi-

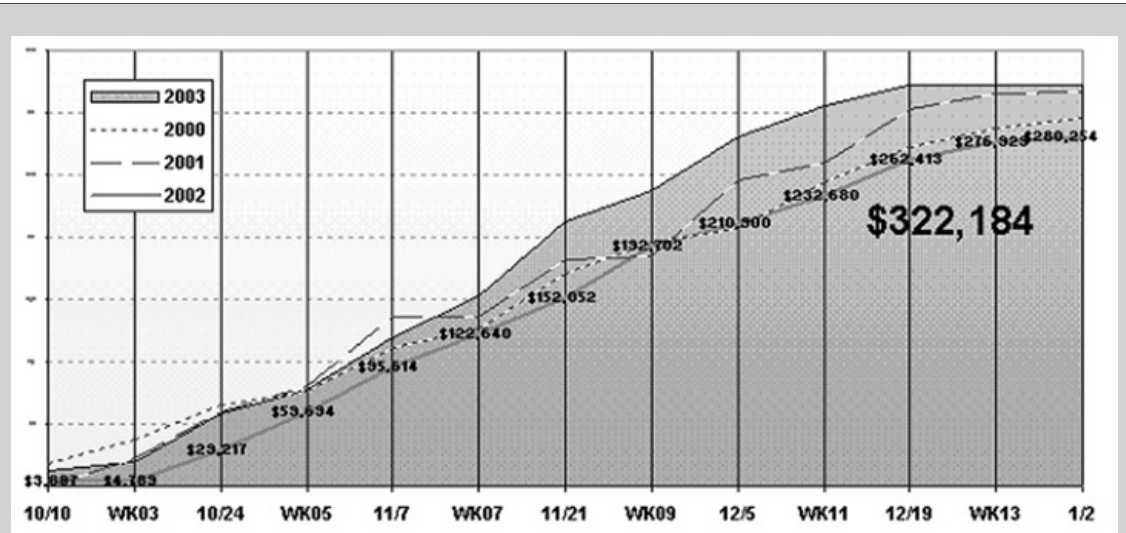
tal MARPAT desert.

When uniformity can be achieved, commanders may authorize the wear of the MCCUU digital MARPAT desert for Marines assigned to Marine Corps Air Station Yuma or Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twenty-nine Palms. Further, commanders may authorize the wear of MCCUU desert digital MARPAT or TAP issue for Marines within one week of deployment to theaters requiring desert MARPATs.

Boonie covers are never authorized in garrison and TAP boots are only authorized to be worn with TAP gear.

The intent is to re-establish uniformity and consistency while allowing commanders to monitor progressive compliance with mandatory MCCUU and MCCB possession schedules outlined in MARADMIN 310/03.

Thanks for your support. Semper Fi.



## CFC remains successful

Marines, Sailors and federal employees have made giving a top priority during this year's Combined Federal Campaign, pledging the highest charitable gift tally in three years. The Combined Federal Campaign at Miramar closed out the 12th week of the campaign with \$322,184.

There is good news to report on this year's campaign and it is clear this campaign was organized with vigor and enthusiasm. Thirty-one of the 49 activities participating in this year's campaign have surpassed what they achieved in last year's campaign.

The Marines, Sailors and federal employees at Miramar significantly improved this year's campaign performance by approaching the charity drive with the same sense of excellence they apply to everything they do.



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**Maj. Gen. James F. Amos**

Commanding General  
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

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Lance Cpl. John Sayas  
*Combat Correspondents*



# Operation Iraqi Freedom: Well on our way

Maj. Gen. Jon A. Gallinetti

MCABWA and MCAS Miramar Commanding General

*Note: Maj. Gen. Jon A. Gallinetti currently serves as the Chief of Staff for Combined Joint Task Force 7, the military command responsible for operations in Iraq. This letter was written to Mr. Charlie Waters, Executive Editor, Fresno Bee, regarding Maj. Gen. Gallinetti's perspective on the military situation in Iraq.*

Finding Saddam Hussein might be the most remembered moment in the history of this conflict and it happened through the hard work and persistence of some of the most professional, committed and dedicated young people America has to offer. They are the latest "Greatest Generation" of service men and women.

The search for Saddam began the moment our boots hit the ground more than nine months ago and did not relent until the moment soldiers heard the words, "I am Saddam Hussein, President of Iraq. I wish to negotiate."

Finding Saddam will pay many dividends for the Coalition as we continue to invest in the safety and security of Iraq. First, his capture means Iraqis can get on with their lives knowing the "Butcher of Baghdad" will never be in a position to inflict brutality against them again.

Former regime elements also suffered a devastating blow. They now know their leader hid in a hole and more importantly, will never return to power. His capture will lead to additional intelligence that we can use to capture other anti-

Coalition forces including those who continue to target the Iraqi people.

Although we expect the capture of Saddam to bring us closer to our objectives, we know that we are already well on our way.

As we continue to capture former regime elements and gain additional information from them, we are developing a virtual library of intelligence. Actionable intelligence gathered from a variety of sources is then developed into offensive operations as we capture additional anti-Coalition and terrorist elements and the weapons and munitions they intend to use against us.

These anti-Coalition forces are fighting a battle they cannot win. In a little over seven months since the fall of the regime, the Coalition and the Iraqi people have made great progress against the efforts of anti-coalition elements. Iraqis are standing up in greater numbers to secure their own country and take it in the direction they think it should go. Our troops continue working toward a stable and secure environment, restoring essential services such as electricity, water and other public facilities.

We have done much in our civil military operations, a key factor in increasing stability and security throughout Iraq. Some of our recent accomplishments include 800 projects worth \$6 million to improve health services, 2,500 public

service projects worth \$20 million on libraries, museums, chambers of commerce and cultural centers and 2,400 education initiatives worth \$22 million.

To date, Coalition forces have spent over \$105 million on projects. Taking money away from non-compliant forces during raids, we have actively put that money to good use by completing over 13,000 essential projects throughout Iraq. These initiatives and others like them will continue as the Coalition is poised to spend \$300 million on future civil military projects.

Ultimately, the Iraqi people will be responsible for their own public security and national defense as they arrest and prosecute criminals and terrorists carrying out cowardly attacks against the Iraqi people.

Today, more than 150,000 Iraqis serve in new Iraqi security services. Whether they are police on the streets stopping crime, preventing terrorist acts or the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps conducting joint patrols with Coalition forces, Iraqis are now the largest part of this international effort to bring safety and stability to the country.

That is why we are winning. The Iraqi people want to see a free and representative Iraq and America's sons and daughters are showing their extraordinary character in the face of danger and hardship.

**'Iraqis are now the largest part of this international effort to bring safety and stability to the country.'**  
**Maj. Gen. Jon A. Gallinetti**

## Marion Carl Squadron makes cash donations

Story by Lance Cpl. John Sayas

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

The Marine Corps Aviation Association Marion Carl Squadron made special donations during the holiday season at their Christmas dinner at the Miramar Officers' Club Dec. 18.

The donated checks worth \$500 were awarded to the Flying Leatherneck museum and Miramar Food Locker in front of the more

than 170 members who attended the event, according to Lt. Col. John W. Guthrie, Marion Carl Squadron operations officer.

The occasion also included the collection of new, unwrapped toys for the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program and a change of command between Col. Stuart L. Knoll, commanding officer, Marine Aircraft Group 16, and Col. Earl S. Wederbrook, commanding officer, Marine Aircraft Group 11.

Wederbrook will be taking charge of the San Diego-based chapter as squadron commander.

The highlight of the event was the introduction of Maj. Gen. James N. Mattis, commanding general, 1st Marine Division, who led thousands of Marines on the ground during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The general thanked 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing for the support they provided during their march to-

wards Baghdad and expressed his appreciation for the way the air-ground Marine team worked together during the war.

"I can't tell you enough how great the Marine Corps air team is today," Mattis said. "I have been doing this for 30 years and I have never seen it better."

During his presentation he discussed some of the toughest decisions he has ever made in his career as his Marines moved north through Iraq. Despite the many challenges the Marines faced, he never doubted the capabilities and support the Wing could provide during the war.

"I am here to thank all of you who handed to me, on a silver platter, a Marine division so well supported by this air wing that I was never concerned whether or not we would be able to get to the enemy and destroy them," he said. "My sole concern all the way through was how to keep the butcher's bill low on our side and for the innocent people of Iraq."

MCAA was chartered as a non-profit organization, after its founding organization, the First Marine

Aviation Force Veterans Association passed into history. There are six squadrons in the organization in cities across the country. Each squadron is made up of active and retired Marine aviators, according to Guthrie.

The FMAFVA inaugurated the Alfred A. Cunningham Award, a prestigious annual award that evolved into the largest military aviation awards program in existence. The award, named in honor of the "Father of Marine Corps Aviation," was first presented to the Marine Aviator of the Year in 1962.

The Marion Carl Squadron is named after Maj. Gen. Marion Carl who died in June 1998. During his distinguished career, he flew 260 different types and models of aircraft which included single and multi-engine seaplanes, single and multi-engine propeller land planes, single and multi-engine turboprops, single and multi-engine jets, single and multi-engine helicopters, transports and rocket powered aircraft. He also flew over 30 different experimental aircraft. He retired in June 1973 with 14,000 flying hours.

## Defense Finance and Accounting Service

ARLINGTON, VA - The end of the calendar year is quickly approaching and that means only one thing in the tax world, tax statements (W-2, 1099R, 1042S). The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) has compiled a schedule of dates when servicemembers, military retirees and annuitants and defense civilian employees can access their tax statements through myPay.

MyPay provides a secure method for users to manage their pay account information. Available around the clock, customers can conveniently make changes online, avoiding the hassles of an office visit.

Military members and Department of Defense civilian employees will once again have access to view, save and print their tax statements from myPay at <https://mypay.dfas.mil>.

"During 2003, more than 1.2 million users viewed their tax statements on myPay, and we continue to encourage users to

view and print their statements online," said Pat Shine, director of DFAS' Military and Civilian Pay Services business line. "Timely access to W-2s and other tax statements is another way myPay gives users control of their pay information."

### About DFAS

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service is the world's largest finance and accounting operation. It provides responsive, pro-

fessional finance and accounting services to the men and women who defend America. In Fiscal Year 2003, DFAS paid about 5.9 million people, processed more than 12.3 million invoices from defense contractors, disbursed more than \$416 billion and managed more than \$194 billion in military trust funds.

For more about DFAS visit <http://www.dfas.mil>.

DFAS is projecting the tax statements will be posted on myPay during the following periods.		
	No earlier than	No later than
Military annuitants	12/13/2003	12/18/2003
DoD civilians	12/24/2003	12/29/2003
Army, Air Force, Navy Reserve	12/26/2003	01/01/2004
National Guard, military retirees	01/01/2004	01/05/2004
Marine Corps Active and Reserve	01/13/2004	01/21/2004
Army, Air Force, Navy Active	01/16/2004	01/26/2004

**Water, Gas and Ventilation**  
Design a gray water collection system for irrigating landscaping.  
If natural gas is unavailable, consider ground source heat pumps.  
Design public space ventilation to respond to occupancy needs with such features as carbon dioxide detectors.  
Avoid air curtains that allow air leakage from conditioned spaces.  
Pressurize and test all ducts for leakage before dropped ceilings are installed.



# Greyhawks prepare for deployment with Nevada training

Story by Lance Cpl. John Sayas

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Marines of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 161 conducted flight training at Indian Springs Air Force Auxiliary Field in Nevada, Dec. 3 through 12, in preparation for a possible deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Although the squadron has not received official deployment orders, the Marines are preparing as if they are going back to Iraq to replace units who have been serving there since the war began, according to Lt. Col. David W. Coffman, commanding officer, HMM-161.

"Our deployment was entirely focused on preparing to go back to Iraq this spring for OIF-2," said Coffman, a Eustis, Texas native who assumed command of the squadron last summer. "We are expecting to get deployment orders to Iraq and this was our way to work on our tactics."

The squadron focused on night operations, ways to defeat the terrorist or missile attacks or small arms threats, as well as planning and executing mission plans for the type of operating environment in Iraq. Crewmembers also practiced firing the .50-caliber machine gun mounted on the rear of the CH-46E to build self-defense capabilities.

"If somebody wants to shoot at us, we want to shoot back," Coffman said. "It is very important to me that we are effective with our weapons. Even though we are not shooters like the (Cobra) attack helicopters, we have great self-defense capabilities with those .50-cals and we want everybody out there on the other end to know that if they mess with us they are going to get a rain of lead from our .50-cal."

He added that their training was fairly routine even though the mission in Iraq has shifted from combat operations to providing security as Iraqis continue rebuilding their country.

"We haven't thrown out any of the tactics that we have been working on over the last 20 years," Coffman explained. "They are going to work for us over there."

Despite continuing insurgent attacks in recent months, Coffman thinks of them as a low threat because they are not as sophisticated with integrated radars and second and third generation surface-to-air missiles. With adequate survivability equipment in sometimes harsh conditions, he feels the



A CH-46E is towed to a hangar by HMM-161 Marines here. The Marines are conducting thorough inspections and maintenance on aircraft as they prepare for a possible deployment to Iraq. Photo by Lance Cpl. John Sayas

squadron can succeed in an environment like Iraq.

"We respect that threat, but we are not afraid of it and we think we can go over there and operate," he said.

HMM-161 Marines were first deployed to Iraq along with other 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing squadrons in February and provided valuable troop transport and supplies to thousands of Marines on the ground as they moved towards Baghdad. They left soon after major combat operations ended successfully in May. They suffered no casualties or loss of aircraft, according to Coffman.

Many of the Marines who served the first time around will be returning with a bit more than just training, but actual combat experience. The training conducted in Nevada allowed Marines with firsthand knowledge to teach newer members of the squadron, according to Coffman.

"The first time we went out there, we had an idea what we were going to do. But this time we know for sure where we are going and what we will be doing," said Cpl. Art Ruisenor, CH-46E crew chief, HMM-161, and Omaha, Neb., native. "Everyone looks to us like we are going to help them out. It's real important for the guys who have already been out there to tell what they already know."

The squadron normally would be preparing for their normal Unit Deployment Program training rotation this summer with Marine Expeditionary Units, but instead are preparing for another deployment in support of rebuilding efforts in Iraq, according to Coffman. Because of the shortened training time, he said they will be conducting more training this month before they do final preparations for their possible deployment to Iraq.

"The challenge for us in the leadership level is how quick can I get these guys trained up and ready to conduct high-tempo combat operations," he said.

Coffman explained that he has great confidence in his Marines, who have a lot of pride, motivation and commitment to accomplishing whatever is asked of them. He expects them to do well and is sure they will return next time with more stories.

"I expected a lot of weeping and Marines saying I can't go," Coffman said. "Instead I had people stopping me in the hallway asking if they can extend so they can go on this deployment. ... I was really overwhelmed by the sense of loyalty by the Marines."

## Miramar Marine selected 3rd MAW NCO of the Year

Story by Cpl. Jeff Zaccaro

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

In 1997, a 19-year-old girl moved from her hometown of Ocotlan Jalisco, Mexico, to the United States with her father, bringing a valuable homeland work ethic, but only a limited English vocabulary.

Little did anyone know that this girl, Norma Garcia, would emerge six years later as Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year for the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing.

Garcia, a sergeant serving the Wing as an aviation operations specialist, enlisted in the Marine Corps' Delayed Entry Program one year after arriving in the states and after finding out that her father couldn't afford to send her to college.

"When I came to America I thought there was only the Army. But when the Marine recruiter contacted me it seemed like a good challenge," she said. "I wanted to do something on my own and something I could be proud of and I really wanted to do something good for this country."

Shortly after graduating recruit training, Garcia started standing out as a stellar Ma-

rine at her military occupational specialty school. Although only a private first class at the time, her instructors noted her work ethic.

"At school the barracks manager was impressed by how I always tried to apply everything I learned in boot camp to the fleet," Garcia said. "He made me his scribe, and I was in charge of assigning rooms and giving new Marines tours of the base."

Like any great leader Garcia's actions at school, and to this date, were not for recognition, but for the satisfaction of doing the right things at the right time.

"Since I came from a different country, I appreciate things a little different than some people, so I always try to do the best I can," she said.

Following Garcia's graduation from MOS school, she was selected for an overseas tour in Okinawa, Japan, before being transferred here.

It wasn't long after Garcia arrived here that her superiors started noticing the same traits in her that her barracks manager noticed early in her career.

"Sgt. Garcia doesn't define herself by



## Convoys roam East Miramar

Lance Cpl. Aaron J. Tappendorf, mobile multi-channel equipment operator, Marine Wing Communication Squadron 38, kneels next to a Heavy High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle taking a defensive position during a training exercise Dec. 16.

MWCS-38 Marines conducted tactical convoy exercises focusing on implemented explosive devices, ambushes and convoy security on East Miramar in preparation for deployment. Photo by Sgt. Richard J. Kulleck



# Call home for the holidays, for free

Story by Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Marines and Sailors here received a morale boost during the holiday season with help from the Uniformed Service Organizations and AT&T phone services.

A state-of-the-art van, equipped with satellite receivers and cable to hook up more than 90 phones, arrived here to open the lines of communication for servicemembers.

"The mission of the USO is to support the morale of our military people," said Regan Wright, USO Council San Diego President. "This program is a great way to boost morale of the Marines and Sailors in San Diego during this Holiday season."

"While I was in Iwakuni I had gone six weeks, sometimes longer, without talking to my family," said Cpl. Aaron Ellis, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron All Weather 242, and Spokane, Wash., native. "It was definitely good to take advantage of something like this."

According to AT&T, Miramar was just one of five stops at local area military installations. This event has also been used on some East Coast military bases with some success.

"The USO Council of San Diego is thrilled to be able to partner with AT&T to bring the USO/AT&T "Call Home for the Holidays" program to the military and their



**Cpl. Aaron Ellis, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron All Weather 242, talks to his mother in Spokane, Wash. Bernadette PerDue of Navy Federal Credit Union is serving him some cookies and juice. The phone call was paid for by AT&T phone services and refreshments were supplied by NFCU. Photo by Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III**

families," he said.

During the holidays some servicemembers may not always be able to call home and talk to mom and dad.

"We're delighted to be able to give something of great

value," said Ivan Dunn, Director of Operations for AT&T Government Solutions. He also added that it was a way for the troops who have sacrificed so much to speak to their loved ones.

# Marine for Life continues expansion

## Program provides transition assistance for departing Marines

Story by Lance Cpl. John Sayas

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Successful job-hunting after leaving the military can not only be a headache, but can also depend on who you know.

The Marine For Life program assists Marines who have been honorably discharged from the service. The goal is to help Marines as they transition from the Marine Corps back into the community. The program enhances the investment in each individual Marine and promotes the beneficial connections between the individual, the Marine Corps and American society, according to the Marine For Life Web site.

The program also includes initiatives involving commanders and Marine Corps culture, but its groundbreaking element will be the creation of a network of Marine Corps

alumni to provide enhanced transition assistance and support to transitioning Marines.

"The goal of the program is to expand relationships with network resources which are Marine-friendly organizations, companies and individuals for the purpose of helping transitioning Marines as they return to their local community," said Maj. David Fennell, MCAS Miramar Marine For Life Hometown Link.

Fennell said the program is still relatively new to the Marine Corps and is still in its formative stage. More than 80 representatives called Hometown Links have been established in cities across the country in the two years the program has been in existence. He said the program expects to have 120 Hometown Links by the end of fiscal year 2004. The Marine For Life network will be ready to assist the more than 27,000 Marines leaving the military annually.

"Hometown Links are spread throughout the country," Fennell said. "We did some number crunching and found out where the larger population centers are located, where Marines are returning home, and established links in those areas."

Hometown Links are staffed by Marine reservists who have done a period of active duty service to establish a network with local businesses and individuals in the area who have an interest in helping former Marines. They spend a lot of time receiving phone calls and working with Marines one-on-one or in small groups to help them answer any questions they may have. They spend time expanding the network by attending meetings with companies and individuals, as well as attending job and career fairs.

"I don't have all the answers but I feel lucky to have the opportunity to introduce a Marine to a contact that may be able to help him," Fennell said. "We would like to put ourselves in a position to where we can connect the Marine with someone who would be able to help him."

Fennell said although reserve Marines may be assisting with transitioning Marines, in no way is the program intended to be another recruiting tool to keep Marines from leaving the service.

"Our purpose is to assist Marines with their transition," he said. "We are not reservists trying to get people to sign up for the

reserves. Many of the Hometown Links have expressed that there has been some reservation by transitioning Marines to get involved with the program because they believe it is too good to be true."

Fennell encourages departing Marines to take a look at the resources available to them through the Marine For Life Web site and identify contacts in a particular field that may be of interested to them.

"There are over 9,000 network resources throughout the country," he said. "My observation of the Marine For Life program is that it is about to take a giant bound in its ability to provide support through fluid communication in the Web site. It is purely an honest and sincere program to help Marines in their transition so that their complete Marine Corps experience will leave them with a positive impression."

For those who have questions and would like more information on links in the San Diego area, contact Maj. David A. Fennell at (619) 253-3360 or visit the Marine For Life program Web site at [www.marine-forlife.com](http://www.marine-forlife.com).

# Food Locker helps families throughout holiday season

Story by Lance Cpl. John Sayas

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

The Navy Wives Club of America's Food Locker filled refrigerators with plenty of food as thousands of food baskets were handed out to military families here during the holiday season.

There are normally 100-200 food baskets donated annually to military families during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, according to Peggy Brandenburg, Food Locker coordinator. She said this year more than 1,300 turkey baskets were given out for Thanksgiving and another 1,000 food baskets for Christmas.

The Food Locker has served the Miramar community

since 1989. The Food Locker receives monetary and food donations such as canned goods, dairy products and other non-perishable-items from the base chaplain and numerous San Diego-based organizations and businesses regularly throughout the year, according to Brandenburg. The items are then sorted by volunteers and given out to thousands of military families who seek assistance.

Brandenburg said many of the donations made by the public over the last couple years have been in response to Sept. 11, 2001 and the ongoing global war on terrorism. These donations have supported thousands of military families who are supporting loved ones deployed overseas.

"We have people now who donate monthly and others who donate a few times a year but those are usually large

donations," Brandenburg said. "Most of the money we received this Christmas mainly came from people who wanted to help those who are over in Iraq and recently came back to be with their families."

Brandenburg said the purpose for the service when the locker was first established was to aid military families on Miramar with food and assistance. By the late 1990s, it began to service all military families in San Diego County.

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society usually refers personnel in need of assistance to the Food Locker, but any service member looking for assistance is welcome to stop by their office located in building 6316.

If you want to make a donation or for more information on the Food Locker, call Peggy Brandenburg at 577-6550.



# Maine students ‘put a Band-Aid on the world’

His students describe this as putting a Band-Aid on the world.

“By putting a Band-Aid on the world we’re trying to make everybody know that we’re doing what we have to do to fight for our country and to keep ourselves united,” said student Justin Elliott.

When the war began in Iraq in March, the Band-Aid project grew.

One of the first casualties was Maj. Jay Aubin, a Marine helicopter pilot who attended the same school as the students. On the second day of the war, Navy Lt. Thomas Adams, also a helicopter pilot, was killed. He was from San Diego.

“The children were drawn to the idea that here were two men whose loss symbolized the loss the country would experience from ‘sea to shining sea,’” Ross wrote in an article.

They raised money for stone markers in honor of the two pilots killed. The one commemorating Aubin will stay in a museum in the backyard of Ross’ house. The one in honor of Adams will go to San Diego to be presented to his family.

They also cut two stars out of an American flag and presented one to Aubin’s mother and the other to Adams’ family.

Ross uses the pilot’s lives as examples for his students to follow.

“The name of the (pilot) from

our community was Jay ‘Sweet Pea’ Aubin, that was his (call sign). And I love being able to tell kids you can be the kind of person that accomplishes things you want to accomplish and still be a ‘sweet pea.’”

The Band-Aid project grew again.

On Dec. 16, the students, with the markers and both flags riding with them, took a 15-hour trip from their small town in Maine to the Washington metropolitan area. Their agenda was full, but they wanted to do everything they could to help commemorate fallen heroes and share their story.

On Dec. 17 at Arlington National Cemetery, they participated in a yearly tradition a businessman started by helping lay 4,000 wreaths in front of headstones. There they also met Army Col. Chuck Taylor, the regimental commander for the Old Guard.

He spoke to them about the importance of duty, trust, and teamwork. “What you do is who you are,” Taylor said to the students.

After laying the wreaths, and touring the cemetery, students went to the Pentagon where they met Marine UH-1N pilot Capt. Beth Ferland and Lt. Cmdr. R. H. Russell, a chaplain at Marine Corps Air Facility Quantico. They showed the students some of the gear helicopter pilots use and an-

swered questions about the military. Director of Marine Corps Public Affairs, Brig. Gen. Mary Ann Krusa-Dossin also spoke to the students about some of her military experiences. Both Marines thanked the students for all of their accomplishments.

The trip also included a tour of the Pentagon.

On Thursday the students were able to eat breakfast with Lt. Col. Robert Clay, the commanding officer of MCAF Quantico. After breakfast, two Marine Helicopter Squadron One pilots told them about what it takes to be a pilot for HMX-1. Their morning concluded with a walk-through of some of the presidential helicopters HMX-1 flies.

“This is the school of life,” said Ross. “It doesn’t get any more real than this. It doesn’t get any more important. It doesn’t get any more valuable. ... What I want them to get out of this is to pay attention to what is going on around them. Because when you pay attention to what is going on around you, you see that ordinary people do extraordinary things all the time. We’re all capable of being somebody that looks back and says they lived a good life. Boy, they were a good person. Boy, they accomplished something in their lifetime. That’s what they’re going to get out of this.”



**Fifth and sixth-grade students from Margaret Chase Smith School in Skowhegan, Maine helped lay 4,000 wreaths in front of headstones at Arlington National Cemetery. Photo by Cpl. Brian Buckwalter**

**Story by Cpl. Brian Buckwalter**

*Headquarters Marine Corps Public Affairs*

ARLINGTON, Va. – It all started with a 6th-grade teacher in Maine who thought of a way to honor victims of Sept. 11, 2001 with his students, an idea that grew and brought some of his students to the Washington area Dec. 17 and 18.

At sunrise on Sept. 11, 2002, Larry C. Ross and 25 students from Margaret Chase Smith School in

Skowhegan, Maine flew a 30x50-foot American flag on top of Cadillac Mountain in Acadia National Park, Maine, allowing it to catch some of the first rays of sunlight on the East Coast. The flag was then transported through a network of volunteers that included airline pilots, police escorts, school children, and a Marine across the country to Coronado Beach in San Diego in time for sunset the same day. They titled the event “From Sea to Shining Sea.”

## Self help Marines help accomplish the mission

**Story by Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III**

*MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent*

Marines and Sailors now have an opportunity to fix problems or make general repairs within their office spaces with the help of a small group of Marines here.

Self-help, located in building 6250, is available to assist anyone who may have questions or need supplies for improvements.

“We have everything here to offer help,” said Sgt. Thomas C. Bruce, self-help noncommissioned officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron. “We have everything from dry-wall to drain cleaners.”

With a storeroom full of equipment and the ability and training to use it, the three-man crew can be tasked with a multitude of different jobs.

During the Miramar Air Show, the self-help crew maintained all of the lighting in the parking areas to ensure visitors to the Air Station got to their vehicles safely.

“From 6 a.m. until midnight, my Marines maintained the lighting in all the parking areas,” said Gunnery Sgt. Johnny N. Mendez, self-help staff noncommissioned officer in charge, H&HS. “We also assembled all the risers and some of the bleachers for the presidential visits.”

Without the assistance of self-help, installations and logistics personnel would have torn down and packed all essential gear that was used during both presidential visits by themselves.

“My crew stayed long after all the spectators and visitors had departed and assisted in the packing of all the bleachers and podiums that were used to make the president’s visit to Miramar such a success,” said Mendez. “The self-help crew can sometimes work long hours.

What we do is not easy.”

Mendez added that some of the tasks they assist with are sometimes completed with little time available.

“One of the self-help Marines assembled two five-foot podiums to mount all the state flags on as a backdrop for the president,” said Mendez. “This was done with a hand saw and spare materials that were in the area.”

The mission statement for self-help, according to Station Order 11014, is to assist station and activity personnel in performing maintenance, repairs and alterations to facilities here.

“One of our goals is to help improve the living and working conditions of Marines,” said Bruce. “We help contribute to the morale and well-being of the Marines we help.”

According to the station order, self-help projects include minor construction, alterations, repair and recurring and nonrecurring maintenance. Jobs can range in size from small painting to floor tiling.

The program also allows Marines to use their own manpower and expertise to complete tasks in a cost effective manner.

“Unfortunately, we do not have the manpower to perform all the maintenance on the air station,” said Bruce. “We are here for more of a maintenance or quality control element to ensure the job is being done the right way.”

For more information about self-help, or to request materials to execute a project, contact the self-help office at 577-1097.

## Getting out?



## Get a sponsor.



[www.MarineForLife.com](http://www.MarineForLife.com)



# 2003 MCAS Miramar Year in Review

## *Remembering eventful year for nation, Miramar*

Story compiled by CPAO

### *MCAS Miramar*

From Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, the deployments, critical missions and war effort sacrifices to Operation Enduring Families, memorials, community relations, firestorms and Sodexo, 2003 was certainly a significant year for MCAS Miramar, San Diego and the entire nation.

Along with the rest of I Marine Expeditionary Force, Miramar's Marines and family members played a pivotal role and were greatly affected by the ongoing war against terror. More than 25,000 Marines and Sailors from Miramar and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton deployed to the Middle East in support of OEF and OIF, according to the 2004 Miramar Shareholders Report. In 2003 alone, the Air Station deployed close to three-quarters of its nearly 10,000 active duty personnel. At the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Aerial Point of Embark, Miramar Marines maintained 24-hour operations to ensure the monumental task of deploying 7,000 Marines from I MEF's air combat element was completed efficiently and safely. The Air Station also served as the Integrated Continental United States Medical Operation Point for West Coast servicemembers from all branches of service injured during OIF. American operations and raids seemed to come to a climax Dec. 13 when U.S. forces captured Saddam Hussein alive near his hometown of Tikrit.

After returning to Miramar June 5 along with Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3, Maj. Gen. James F. Amos, commanding general, 3rd MAW, summed up the Marines' accomplishments – "We flew more than 10,000 sorties and dropped more than 6.5 million pounds of ordnance. In the 28.5 days of missions we destroyed eight Iraqi divisions, two of which were the elite Republican Guard."

While deployed Marines performed and completed their missions abroad, service and family members remaining played a crucial part as well. Despite reduced staff in all departments and sections, Miramar Marines were up to the challenge, performing their increased, high-intensity duties with extraordinary skill throughout the deployment.

Commands on the home front worked tirelessly to continue to improve quality of life, ensure a safe working and living environment aboard the Air Station, take care of families and bolster an already strong relationship with the San Diego community. The family-led focus helped ensure that all OIF homecomings were joyous ones for family members and returning Marines.

In the last year, Miramar has opened a new, state-of-art fitness facility, significantly upgraded the Exchange and flight line food courts, bringing KFC, Quizno's,

Taco Bell Express and other quality eateries aboard the Air Station and awarded a contract to upgrade the enlisted clubs.

To support the families of deployed servicemembers, Maj. Gen. Jon A. Gallinetti, commander, MCABWA, and commanding general, Miramar, launched Operation Enduring Families, under which family support activities were augmented. A Crisis Family Assistance Center was opened and donations for deployed troops were collected as part of the "Patriot Program."

The Miramar Youth Activities Program became the first officially accredited program of its kind Marine Corps-wide.

Miramar hosted several special events including a Super Bowl pre-game show, attended by more than 1,000 and aired on FOX Super Bowl Sunday and many celebrity "greet the troops" events that brought television, movie and sports stars here.

The January 2003 issue of the Marine Corps Times recognized Miramar as the top base for singles and recreation. Local community relations remained strong as the Air Station opened its gates for events such as the MCAS Miramar Air show, Open Cockpit Days at the Flying Leatherneck Museum, twice-monthly tours, Educators Workshops and youth events. Participation in Community

Leaders Forums, attendance at city council meetings, dozens of color guards at local events, and volunteerism are only a few of the ways Miramar Marines have remained active and valuable members of the community.

Further fostering our part in surrounding communities, the Miramar Fire Department responded to more than 190 emergencies outside the gates of the Air Station as part of a mutual-aid agreement with San Diego County law enforcement and fire departments.

When the 2003 Wildfires burned up much of San Diego County, approximately

See **YIR**, page 8





Frustrated with the anti-military sentiment that had been reported in the news, more than 4,000 people rallied at the 9000 block of Miramar Rd. outside the North Gate here March 23 over a six-hour period. *Photo by Cpl. D.B. Bailey*



The 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing held a memorial service Dec. 2 at their headquarters building here in honor of their fallen Marines. *Photo by Cpl. Jeff Zaccaro*



Family members, loved ones and friends of 261 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Marines and Sailors wait behind a yellow ribbon at Hangar 4 at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., May 26. *Photo by Sgt. W.A. Napper Jr.*

## 2003 Year in Photos

**YIR,**  
continued from page 7

200 emergency personnel worked to contain and control the fire. Members of the Miramar Fire Department, Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting/Recovery Marines and Military Police helped save structures and aircraft from the blaze that scorched more than 19,000 acres of station property and more than 200,000 acres of land in and around the San Diego area.

More evidence of Miramar's success at home came in the form of various awards given for safety excellence. Awards included the Secretary of the Navy Achievement in Safety Ashore and the Department of the Navy Safety Excellence Award. The focus on safety was not confined to the workplace. Miramar participated in the federal "Click-it or Ticket" program once again and the Provost Marshal's Office supported several programs including drug awareness reduction education and gang recognition classes.

For Miramar and the nation, 2003 saw sacrifice, destruction and loss, but also victory, success and most of all patriotism.

"Napoleon once said that 'troops will fight long and hard for a little piece of colored ribbon,' but I think Napoleon only had it half right," said Lt. Gen. James Conway, commanding general, I MEF, when I MEF was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation Nov. 20 for their work in Iraq. "Marines fight for other reasons. They fight for each other, they fight because they are American patriots and they fight because they believe in what they are fighting for. But I will tell you that when they finish fighting they find it appropriate that, that bright piece of ribbon makes its way to their chests."



Infantry Marines attack a simulated enemy during the Marine Air Ground Task Force demonstration at the 2003 Miramar Air Show Oct. 19. The air show drew an estimated 750,000 visitors between Oct. 17 and 19. *Photo by Cpl. Chance W. Haworth*





A Marine renders a salute at sunset in the Middle East. *Photo by Sgt. T.L. Carter-Valrie*



Fire fighters from the Miramar Fire Dept. fight a small brush fire on the east side of Hangar 0, Oct. 26, during San Diego's 2003 Firestorm. *Photo by Cpl. Chance W. Haworth*



A clown entertains children during a Marine Aircraft Group 16 family picnic April 12 here. *Photo by Sgt. A.C. Strong*



# The story of Gilles Lagin and Belleau Wood



Gilles Lagin's display cases are full of Marine Corps paraphernalia from the World War I era. Photo by Master Sgt. Phil Mehringer

Story by Master Sgt. Phil Mehringer

*Marine Forces Europe*

## A TRIP BACK IN TIME

Driving up a farm road in a faded yellow four-wheel-drive and voicing more interesting facts about the battle fought in this area is local resident, collector and amateur historian Gilles Lagin. It is difficult to hear his voice over the engine noise and squeals his 1980 Mercedes Benz SUV emits as he navigates the rough terrain.

Lagin keeps his eyes on the trail and continues to describe the battlefield conditions as everyone struggles to hear him. Eventually, at the end of a freshly plowed field, Lagin brings his vehicle to a stop near a tree line. Everyone gets out and moves toward the woods on the edge of the field.

"It is here," he says as he points to the opposite tree line some 300 meters away, "that on the morning of June 6, 1918, U.S. Marines attacked the German lines."

Standing in a trench once occupied by Marines and peering through the tree line, one can only imagine what went through the minds of the Marines who occupied this position more than 85 years ago. With their orders received and objective given, the action was near. This would be no ordinary battle as the fresh, green Marines were about to fight a seasoned German army that had just punched a 70-kilometer hole in the Allied lines and were on their way to Paris.

There was not a definitive Allied defensive line when the Marines, the last of the reserve forces, made their way to the enemy through exhausted Allied forces retreating from the front. Answering the plea from a French officer for the Marines

to join the retreat, Capt. Lloyd Williams shouted, "Retreat, hell! We just got here!"

Although U.S. Marines in the area stopped the German offensive, it was now time to push them back and out of Belleau Wood.

The waist-high wheat field the Marines had to cross starting their offensive was covered with interlocking sectors of German machine guns.

"It was bad, real bad," said Lagin.

He continued to say that while attacking Hill 142 the Marines would take 333 casualties - dead, wounded or missing. By the end of the day the Marines suffered 1,087 casualties, exceeding the total of all previous casualties in the Corps' history.

The battle for Belleau Wood raged on until June 24, when the Germans were pushed out of the northern edge of the woods and Marine Maj. Maurice Shearer telegraphed the American Expeditionary Force headquarters, "Woods now U.S. Marine Corps' entirely."

Lagin explained that it was during the battle for Belleau Wood the famous quote, "Come on you-sons-of-bitches, do you want to live forever" was screamed by Gunnery Sgt. Dan Daly. "He had to motivate the Marines," Lagin added.

## THE FASCINATION BEGINS

The fascination Lagin has with the Battle of Belleau Wood started when he was about nine years old. On display near the north end of battlefield are German artillery pieces that Lagin and other schoolmates came to visit. It was this experience combined with stories from his grandfather, a World War II veteran stationed near the Maginot Line and later captured by the Germans that perked an early interest in military history.

Lagin has a difficult time explaining

what he felt, but said that during this time, "Something started for me."

Most of all, though, Lagin explains that the combined events of a community project and a school experience at about the same time ensured his interest in the Marine Corps and Belleau Wood forever.

The community project educated Lagin on the proper archeological techniques to locate, unearth and care for ancient artifacts. He worked for several years volunteering and honing his skills near the old castle in Chateau-Thierry, France, his hometown, until professionals were hired full time.

The final event that destined Lagin to become infatuated with Marines and Belleau Wood was simply an oversight.

The fact that World War I history, according to his teacher and textbook, mentioned little about American participation in the war unsettled the young man because he knew better.

It was several years later when Lagin's grandmother gave him a metal detector for his 12th birthday, that his two passions came together. The simple metal detector had a single bulb that would light up when placed over a dense object such as metal. Lagin took the metal detector to Belleau Wood and on the very first day he discovered equipment belonging to a German soldier, including a belt buckle and cartridges.

## TODAY'S MARINES

Now 39-years-old, Lagin has only strengthened his interest in the American participation in World War I. A fork-lift mechanic, he said his family has lived in and around Chateau-Thierry as farmers for five generations and the "ground was saved by the Americans that came to this battle."

In his broken English Lagin said, "The first help to my family came from Americans. They built a primitive wooden house and (were) given horses for working in the field."

Lagin has met many Marines who visit the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery that lies at the northern edge of Belleau Wood where 2,289 American servicemembers who fought in the vicinity are buried. He has photos with several Commandants of the Marine Corps including Generals Mundy, Krulak and Jones.

Educating U.S. Marines about the battle of Belleau Wood motivates Gilles Lagin. He has met individual Marines and groups of Marines, and he has even spent the night in Belleau Wood with Marines. His time spent camping with Marines from 2nd Battalion 6th Marines a few years ago is still fresh in his memory.

"We found an old .45 that night," he said. "Spending time with Marines, it is a part of my life," he added. "I am very proud to tell the story of the U.S. Marines."

Lagin estimates that before 9/11 he visited with approximately 1,000 Marines a year to conduct battlefield studies. Since then, he says, there have not been as many visitors to the battlefield, although he hopes that will change soon.

## HELPING FAMILIES

Lagin's fascination with the battle of Belleau Wood has helped many American families bring closure to coping with the loss of a loved one. Lagin has a Web site that provides assistance to families that would like to know more about how their Marine may have died or where he fought in the battle. He added that most families only received a message from the U.S. government that their loved one had died and received few additional facts.

With as little as a last name and a unit,

Lagin can cross-reference his library of books to find field reports from the day, time and location of a Marine's death. He can then find out what the unit's last orders were, and from that information provide a more detailed account of the battle that took place on a particular day, digest it all, then provide a

synopsis to inquiring families.

"It is my passion to explain what Americans were doing here and to honor their memory and their heroic fight," said Lagin. "I try to explain what really happened and how he may have died."

## MUSEUM

Lagin's passion for the battle of Belleau Wood is better explained by a visit to his

**When asked how much money his collection cost him, Lagin struggled to find an answer. He hesitated, tilted his head, shrugged his shoulders and said about 375,000 Francs, which is about \$70,000. This amount did not include the money necessary to renovate his barn to maintain the museum. That was another \$20,000 he said.**







# SSMA Club has room for you

*SSMA Club offers low rates for servicemembers staying in Manhattan*

Story by Gunnery Sgt. Tim McGough

*New York Public Affairs*

Servicemembers stay in Midtown Manhattan for very low rates.

Most tourists who vacation in New York City have to save their money a long time before they can afford to visit. A majority of the money is spent on hotel rooms. For servicemembers, retirees and veterans that is a different story. They can stay at the Soldiers', Sailors', Marines' and Airmen's Club in Manhattan for less than breakfast may cost in the city.

"The club offers servicemembers an affordable way to stay in Manhattan and enjoy the city," said Marty Edelman, executive director of the SSMA Club. "Military members aren't over paid and the club is a way to give something back to them."

The SSMA Club came from the Servicemen's Club, which was founded in 1919 to accommodate servicemen returning from overseas duty in World War I. Cornelia Barnes Rogers, who served with American Forces in France in 1918 as a civilian ambulance driver, and Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt Jr., who served in France in 1918 with the American Red Cross with the support of Gen. John J. Pershing, raised the money to start the Club.

"We are in our 84th year," said Edelman, who has been at the club for almost four years. "It is a wonderful and affordable way for servicemembers and their

families to visit New York."

The club is a safe place to sleep while visiting the Big Apple. Guests can either have their own room or they might have to share a room with other guests.

"If you come during the week we will accommodate you with your own room, but if you come on the weekend we usually pair people up," said Edelman. "You don't come to New York to stay in a hotel room, you come to see the sights and it is definitely a way to meet some interesting people."

The Club has been host to more than 2,500,000 guests and offers almost anything guests need. This sounds fantastic, but guests need to know it is not the Waldorf or the Ritz.

"The Club rents beds, not rooms," said Edelman. "We have 21 rooms with two beds to accommodate couples and six rooms with three beds. We also have one room with four beds and one room with six beds to accommodate families or groups." Visitors should remember that all beds at the SSMA Club are singles.

Families with small children have to do some prior planning because the club doesn't offer cribs and additional beds for use in rooms. Also there are separate communal bathrooms and showers for men and women.

If you're looking for something just a little nicer, the club offers one VIP room on the first sleeping floor. "It is available to a lone occupant or a couple," said Edelman. "It is a little more expensive, but still well below



**A majority of money tourists spend while vacationing in New York City is on hotel rooms. For servicemembers, retirees and veterans that is a different story. The SSMA club is located on Lexington Ave. at the corner of 37th St., in the heart of midtown Manhattan. Photo by Gunnery Sgt. Tim McGough**

the average cost of a hotel in Manhattan." According to Edelman the average cost of a hotel room is approximately \$174 per night.

While staying at the SSMA Club, servicemembers and their families have a perfect place to lay their heads down and get a good night sleep, but as Edelman

said before, that is what the club is there for. "There is so much to do in the city, not many people come here to stay in a hotel all day," he said. "We make sure servicemembers are secure in knowing they have a safe, comfortable place to sleep."

So if you have been saving your money to do some shopping

in New York City, maybe you should take a look at the Soldiers', Sailors', Marines' and Airmen's Club. With the lower rates you might have enough money left over for a big New York breakfast.

For more information on the SSMA Club go to [www.ssma-club.org](http://www.ssma-club.org) or call (800) 678-8843.



# Marine by day, Super Dad by night

## Marine juggles career, two children with special needs

Story by Cpl. Kristen L. Tull

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

At first glance Savine and Jacob look like any ordinary six and four year old, but their normalcy runs only skin deep because of a disorder they both have: autism.

One Miramar Marine quickly learned that autism affects every aspect of the entire family's life.

According to the National Institute for Mental Health, autism is a neurological disorder that typically appears during the first three years of life. It affects the brain's processing of the five senses impacting the normal development of the brain. This results in difficulties in the areas of social interaction, verbal and non-verbal communication skills and leisure and play skills.

The severity differs for each child. Some children may have a severe case of autism and never say a word, while others are able to obtain doctorate degrees. There is no known cause, but the disorder appears to be hereditary. Parents who have one child with autism have a higher risk of having another child with autism.

Known to Savine as "Daddy Justin," Cpl. Justin Schreiter, G-6 operations clerk for Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, recently married Victoria who had two children from a previous marriage.

"If you have autism, you don't see me as a person talking to you, you see a shape, connected to another shape, that makes sounds, and moves, has a scent and may even touch you," said Victoria. "The average person processes all of this very quickly and realizes everything's connected. They don't," she said. "They have to process everything, with all of the senses out of tune. It's very confusing to them."

The Shreiters met posting ads on the information super highway.

"I met her on Yahoo Personals," said Schreiter. "We talked for a while, and then decided to meet. We've been together ever since."

Victoria let him know right away that she had two children with autism.

"I had no idea what it was. She said it was a disorder that affected how they learned and interacted with other people," said Schreiter.

When it came time for Justin to meet Victoria's children, she had no doubts he would interact well with her children.

"I could tell by Justin's character, he would be great with my kids," said Victoria.

"I had no experience with children. I knew they were autistic, but I had nothing to compare them to. They seemed like a normal four and six-year-old to me," said Schreiter.

But, they're far from that. Savine, a beautiful little girl with long blonde hair, attends therapy five days a week after school instead of going outside to play. Savine, who was originally non-verbal and disconnected from human contact, has made great progress and is now diagnosed with high-functioning autism. She once could not even tolerate a human voice singing. Now she sings along with her mom in the car on the way to therapy, is up to grade level in her academics, and now has a few children she considers good friends in her class at school.

"Our goal for Savine is to be able to take care of herself and now, Jacob," said Victoria. "Because of the different therapy she goes to, Savine is progressing very well, and we're pretty confident she'll be able to do that."

Jacob is four and learning how to use a Velcro board with pictures of things such as water, pretzels and a ball in order to communicate what he wants. Jacob was diagnosed with autism at 18 months and according to Victoria has not made the gains Savine has, and is more severely

affected by the disorder. He does not have many language skills, has not developed "normal" toy play and cannot yet understand most basic requests that are made of him.

"He isn't expected to ever be able to take care of himself," said Justin.

"They are also on a special diet, the gluten and casein-free diet, which doesn't allow them things like wheat, oats or dairy products. When we go to McDonalds, I order them a double cheeseburger happy meal. They get the meat, drink, fries and toy, I get the bread and cheese," said Justin.

"This diet is part of the Pheiffer treatment program. After a lot of research of the different biomedical theories that are out there, this is the one we felt had the most concise testing, with years of research behind it," said Victoria.

"When it comes to the food they eat, we can tell if they ate something they weren't supposed to by the way they

respond and act," said Justin. "They will be more distant, compulsive and not as focused," he said.

"We're pretty limited as to where we can shop for groceries or go out to eat, but the results are well worth it," said Victoria.

Victoria is a parent coordinator at a center where parents go once they find out their child has autism, or other developmental disabilities. She helps direct them on where to go for resources and what to expect in the intake process.

When she's not at work, she's attending conferences on the newest therapies, serving on the Board of the San Diego Chapter Autism Society of America and taking the children to the therapies her husband can't.

"I joined the Marine Corps to pay for school. I'm still able to go, but only one class at a time. Right now my family comes first. When my children get situated and I feel comfortable that they are well on

their way in therapy, I'll take more classes. Right now, I'm in a therapeutic program offered at Grossman College," said Schreiter.

"Justin gives 100 percent to the Marine Corps as well as his family," said Ken Verdoliva, G-6 Operations officer.

Verdoliva says Schreiter is one of the best Marines he's ever worked with.

"I've never once had to look over his shoulder or wonder if he got the job done," said Verdoliva.

"My work section really works with me," said Schreiter. "There are days I need to leave early in order to make it to (Savine and Jacob's) therapy, and as long as I get my work done, they don't have a problem with letting me go."

"I don't know how he does it, balancing his responsibilities at home with the needs of the Marine Corps, without a single complaint," said Verdoliva.

**'I joined the Marine Corps to pay for school. I'm still able to go, but only one class at a time. Right now my family comes first. When my children get situated and I feel comfortable that they are well on their way in therapy, I'll take more classes.'**  
**Cpl. Justin Schreiter**

*Doctors combat sickness -  
you combat accidents*



## Chapel weekly schedule of events

### Holy Family Catholic Community

- ♦ Mass: 11 a.m. Sunday, 11:30 a.m. weekdays.
- ♦ Rosary: 10:30 a.m. Sunday.
- ♦ Confession: 10:15 a.m. Sunday or for appointments call Father Berchmanz at 577-1333.
- ♦ Religious classes for children for first communion, confirmation: 9:30-10:45 a.m. Sunday.
- ♦ Youth gathering and planning following mass Sunday.
- ♦ Baptism: Normally the first Sunday of the month. Call chaplain's office for details.
- ♦ Marriage: Call chaplain for details at least six months before wedding.
- ♦ Instruction in the Catholic faith (RCIA). Call chaplain's office for details.
- ♦ Scripture Class: 7 p.m. Wednesday in Chapel classroom.
- ♦ Choir Practice: 6 p.m. Wednesday in Main Chapel.

### Liturgical Christian

- ♦ Sunday: Choir rehearsal at 9 a.m.  
Liturgical worship at 9:30 a.m.  
Adult/Youth/Children Bible study at 10:45 a.m.
- ♦ Tuesday: Morning prayer group (Room 4) at 6 a.m.  
Contemporary Gospel Service at 7:30 p.m.
- ♦ Wednesday: Crafts and conversation at 9 a.m. Free childcare provided.  
Women's bible study at 10:45 a.m.  
Baptist service at 7 p.m.
- ♦ Thursday: Liturgical choir rehearsal at 7:30 p.m.
- ♦ Friday: Baptist bible study at 7 p.m.

### Jewish

- ♦ First Friday of the month at MCRD San Diego at 7 p.m.
- ♦ Last Friday of the month in Edson Range Chapel Camp Pendleton at 7:30 p.m.

## Theater closing

Effective Jan. 12, the Miramar Station Auditorium/Movie Theater will be closed for renovations for a minimum of 90 days.

Renovations will include new carpeting, tile and seating, as well as the installation of an air-conditioning and heating system, a fire safety system and a new roof.

During this time the theater will be closed for all training and movie program opportunities.

Theater personnel look forward to serving you when the theater re-opens in the spring.

## Winter Madness

Be a part of the Miramar "Winter Madness" Racquetball Tournament, which begins Jan. 20.

There will be novice, intermediate and advanced divisions, as well as singles and doubles competitions. Matches are scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. during the weekdays. Awards will be given to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners in each division.

Sign up at the Main Gym or call 577-4128/1202. Entry deadline is Jan. 14. Players meeting is Jan. 15 at 11:30 a.m. in the Semper Fit Gym conference room.

## CACO training

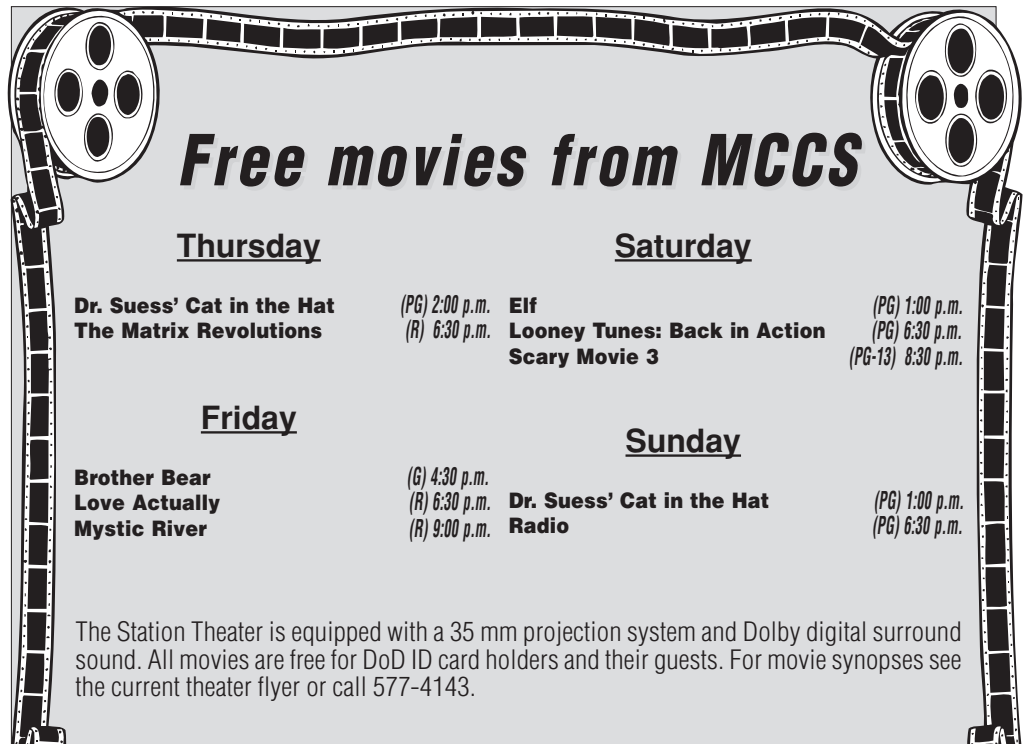
Headquarters Marine Corps Casualty Branch will be at Miramar Tuesday to conduct Casualty Assistant Call Officer training, which is intended for all staff noncommissioned officers and commissioned officers. Training is offered on a port and starboard session in the Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area Headquarters building auditorium, and will be a joint training session with 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing personnel.

At the direction of the acting commander, all SNCOs and officers are required to attend. As we gear up for a future Marine deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II, the information covered during this training session will be beneficial in the event you are tasked to make a casualty call.

Headquarters Marine Corps will be aboard Miramar Jan. 14 to conduct deployed check issue process training (auto populated personal casualty report format) which is intended for administrators with instructions on how to prepare PCRs using new computer software. A separate email will go out to all adjutants and administration officers announcing this training.

Below is MRC's proposed schedule confirmed by commanding general I MEF:

CACO Training (all SNCOs and offic-



## Free movies from MCCS

Thursday		Saturday	
<b>Dr. Suess' Cat in the Hat</b> <b>The Matrix Revolutions</b>	(PG) 2:00 p.m. (R) 6:30 p.m.	<b>Elf</b> <b>Looney Tunes: Back in Action</b> <b>Scary Movie 3</b>	(PG) 1:00 p.m. (PG) 6:30 p.m. (PG-13) 8:30 p.m.
Friday		Sunday	
<b>Brother Bear</b> <b>Love Actually</b> <b>Mystic River</b>	(G) 4:30 p.m. (R) 6:30 p.m. (R) 9:00 p.m.	<b>Dr. Suess' Cat in the Hat</b> <b>Radio</b>	(PG) 1:00 p.m. (PG) 6:30 p.m.

The Station Theater is equipped with a 35 mm projection system and Dolby digital surround sound. All movies are free for DoD ID card holders and their guests. For movie synopses see the current theater flyer or call 577-4143.

ers, installation and FMF):

Tuesday and Jan. 14: Miramar 8 a.m. and 1 p.m., COMCABWEST Auditorium.

## Choose to lose

Learn how to lose weight and stay healthy with this four-class series. Classes run every Tuesday night from Jan. 27 to Feb. 17, from 5 to 6 p.m. in the Semper Fit Fitness Center Conference Room. Topics include how to have more energy, exercise tips, and what to eat and why. For more information or to sign up, call Julie Carlson at 577-7963/1331.

## Watch college football at clubs

You can watch college football at the Staff NCO and Enlisted Clubs now.

Enjoy appetizer and drink specials! Also watch NFL Football every Sunday. Enter to win a trip for two to the Superbowl!

For more information call 693-1543.

## All hands Bingo

Every Monday and Wednesday evening and Saturday afternoon, the main room at the E-Club becomes an All Hands Bingo Parlor.

The doors will open at 5 p.m. for the 7 p.m. game. Saturday games start at 1:30 p.m. An early bird game starts 30 minutes before the main game. With a possible top jackpot of \$25,000, bingo offers a fun-filled afternoon or evening!

The Pizza Pizzazz menu is available, as well as full beverage service. The Enlisted Club is in building 5509, with the Staff NCO Club, the Great Escape and Pizza Pizzazz.

Everyone is invited to play (except Bingo employees and their immediate families). You must be 18-years-old to participate. Call 689-1460 for details.

## For the family

Flu shots are available to Tricare members at the MCAS Miramar Clinic.

For more information contact Chief Petty Officer Thomas, Miramar Clinic, at 577-6739.

## L.I.N.K.S. dates

New L.I.N.K.S. dates - To better accommodate leave schedules for the holidays, the next L.I.N.K.S. session has been changed to Jan. 13 and 14 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information on 2004 L.I.N.K.S. meeting dates or to register call 577-4810.

## Youth Center Cheerleading

Registration for cheerleading is going on now through Jan. 9. Sign up at the MCAS Miramar Youth and Teen Center. Call 577-4136 for more information.

*Have fun but  
come back safe!*



**Saving,**  
 continued from page 2

that retirement was on the horizon and is preparing for the next phase in his life.

“My goal has always been to have two months terminal leave and go straight into a job,” commented Stark, a native of Kansas City, Mo. “I still have to work again (so I don’t have to) touch the other money. Over the course of the last two years, I have been trying to pay things off and get myself squared away. I still have bills, but they’re not that bad compared to what they were five years ago.”

Sound financial planning and education on different money matters is key to successfully saving for your future. Some commands aboard the station have their own command financial specialist to assist Marines at the unit level.

Gunnery Sgt. Raymond L. Detmers has been the MALS-16 command financial specialist for two years and provides briefs to new Marines in the squadron on financial responsibility and programs such as the Thrift Savings Plan.

“NCOICs know they can send Marines to me for one-on-one counseling. If I can’t help them I send them on to the Marine Corps Community Services Counseling Cen-

ter for further assistance.”

To find more information regarding financial planning, contact your unit’s command financial specialist or the MCCS Counseling Center at 577-9802.

**NCO,**  
 continued from page 4

MOS or duty assignment,” said Gunnery Sgt. Butch Trail, who nominated Garcia for the Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3 NCO of the Quarter for the fourth quarter. “First and foremost she’s an NCO so she has a positive influence on many Marines everyday, not just the people she works with.”

Garcia shares the same appreciation for her leaders, past and present, as they share for her.

“I owe a lot of thanks to my prior leaders because they have contributed a lot to who I am today,” said Garcia. “One of the main reasons I always try to excel and do my best is to show them that their hard work is not in vain.”

Perhaps one of the best payoffs to her leaders was going up for, and winning, the MWHS-3 NCO of the Quarter board, and subsequently taking the 3rd MAW NCO of the Quarter board.

Now that Garcia has these two accom-

plishments under her belt, she will be trying her hand at serving as a Marine Combat Training Instructor at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.

“I want to influence new Marines and make sure they stay motivated and know that if they set goals they can achieve anything,” Garcia said.

As for Garcia, who has earned her jump wings, she has a few goals of her own.

“I am just finishing up my associates degree, and I am going to work at my bach-

elors degree while at Camp Pendleton,” she said. “I would also like to try to pick up meritorious staff sergeant.”

Over the last six years, Garcia has transformed from a young girl unfamiliar with America and the Marine Corps, to a selfless, knowledgeable leader who knows her greatest challenges still lay ahead.

“I know that becoming a MCT instructor is going to be a big challenge, and I am going to have to work harder than I ever have over there,” she said.

**2004  
 Happy  
 New  
 Year!**